

DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL

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The Cubeo are also fond of the young of animals and treat them with intelligent solicitude. One man built a long platform in his house so that his dogs would not have to sleep on the ground. Men, having shot some monkeys, found an infant clinging to its mother's dead body. They massaged the monkey's breast, saying, "The baby should have the last drop of its mother's milk."

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Toilet training is casual. No one who carries a child about shows annoyance or disgust at being soiled. The Cubeo are reticent about excretory functions but they do not teach by chiding. They have no fixed ideas as to when a child should be toilet trained. The only injunctions a crawling baby is likely to hear are warnings against injury, if it is too near the fire or the liquid starch with its poisonous content of prussic acid. Still, it is rare for a walking child to urinate or defecate in the house.

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Walking and talking are actively encouraged. To help the child walk the father provides a harness (*taro*) through which the child's legs pass, allowing it to sit, stand, or walk. The harness is often suspended from a beam and serves as a tether for the child. Mother and father stimulate the child to talk by fluttering its lips. Lip fluttering is a game that persists into late childhood. Cubeo parents dread passivity in a child. They want to see it stirring about and restless. It is for this reason that the mother teases her infant, stirring it to anger or gaiety. The story is told that *Kiui* once observed a passive child. He said, "The child must be made to move about," and so created the bothersome pium flies.

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[773]

The crawling baby is still in its mother's charge. When it has begun to walk and to take solid nourishment, and its parents have resumed sexual relations, it is transferred to the care of an older sister. Every little girl from the age of six on is burdened with a walking baby that rides her left hip as it did its mother's. At this age, when it is learning to walk, many people look after the child. Its paternal grandmother becomes a principal guardian and looks after the child's feeding. After a new baby is born the separation of the young walking child from its mother becomes almost complete. A woman discourages nursing by coating her nipples with a bitter substance even though a boy has casual and playful access to his mother's breast until about the age of six.

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[862]

CHILDHOOD

In the life of a boy there is an interval of some four years when he no longer receives the same close attention from his mother and has

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[text continues on p. 177]

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The Forest Addicts

141 The Tukano are small: a man rarely exceeds five foot six and the women are
 164 often no more than four foot ten inches. To see a cripple or deformed person
 291 is unusual. They are healthy and immensely strong. A man wears no more
 301 than his loincloth, today cut from a piece of trade cotton but formerly a
 strip of beaten barkcloth. Around his neck are three or four coils of minute
 white porcelain beads, which are among the most valued objects of ex-
 change; a tight string of black berries is strung on *cumare* palm fibre above
 each elbow. The ears are often pierced with a short cane jutting out from the
 lobe; sometimes a feather is put into the cane, or a flower replaces the ear-
 plug. With their short, cropped hair and well-proportioned bodies they
 stand out as strong figures, beautifully adapted to the forests in which they
 live.

481 Their gait is jerky rather than slow and relaxed, indeed they almost run;
 whether the Indian is out hunting or carrying heavy loads he always moves
 147 in the same way. We could only look on amazed as our fifteen-gallon fuel
 drums were carried for two- or three-hour stretches with no apparent diffi-
 culty. They only showed any signs of wilting in strong sunlight; an Indian
 would rather travel by night than on an open river in the midday sun; his
 home is in the cool forest or under the dark eaves of the *maloca*. His face
 302 painted red with *karayuru*, a bow and a quiver of curare-tipped arrows in his
 411 hand, he has little sympathy for strangers and would rather remain undis-
 609 turbed. It is therefore not surprising that the Indian's face tells you little.
 152 When he stares at you with his black eyes, it is as though you were peering into
 the cold unknown, and there is little warmth in his expression. We very sel-
 dom noticed any demonstration of affection among the older people. Husband
 593 and wife live together rather as a matter of arrangement than through love,
 85 and tenderness was only shown to the younger children. The old people,
 888 once unfit to go out hunting or to work in the plantation, may be neglected
 in times of shortage and even left to die. They are no longer of any use to the
 society, so it is best they go; for theirs is a harsh world where only the fittest
 can survive.

576 Although the Tukano seem outwardly reserved, lacking in affection and
 often proud, they are invariably very courteous. Their greetings are formal -
 just as we shake hands they always exchange a lengthy stream of words. It is

Tucano

249 spend the greater part of the morning collecting the leaves which they pre-
 462 pare during the afternoon and evening. It is a serious task and one which
 each man undertakes with a strange air of concentration. Each coca plant is
 selectively stripped leaf by leaf before the next one is tackled. The headman
 carries the basket with him and gradually it fills with handfuls of pale sage-
 green leaves. The younger men collect the leaves almost reverently in their
 right hands before emptying them into the basket, their faces serious, their
 crouched bodies shining in the strong morning sun, their short, clipped
 speech broken occasionally by a high-pitched laugh.

512 In the distance small ribbons of smoke rise in a misty cloud. The women
 244 are just visible, their squat-figures crouching among the manioc plants. They
 462 can be heard laughing; occasionally a baby cries and the children romp and
 • 85 play among the bright-green manioc plants whose tall spindly branches
 stretch skywards some six feet, terminating in clusters of long, thin, starlike
 leaves. With their babies straddled across their backs the women spend the
 morning cutting out the long potato-like roots from the sandy soil and
 putting the waste foliage into piles to be burnt. It is hot with the sun stream-
 ing down, the fires crackling and the smoke enshrouding the working bodies.
 There is little time for rest, though a woman will stop to swing her child
 around and let it suckle her breast; a mother may give a fat yellow beetle
 grub to her child to eat, having detached the head - a great delicacy, tasting
 like butter. Soon large baskets are filled with roughly peeled and half-cleaned
 roots.

512 The sun is high overhead and the men leave for the *maloca* with their basket
 [482] full of coca leaves; on top they place large dried leaves from the *yarumo*
 (Cecropia) trees which grow like weeds in the *chagra*. The women too load
 their heavy baskets on to their backs, the headbands taking the greater part
 [222] of the fifty-pound weight. The whole group hurries through the forest in
 silence, passing the old *chagra* where the headman's wife leaves the other
 women to collect pineapples, then down to the stream beneath the *maloca*.
 At this point comes one of the noisiest and most amusing incidents in their
 [515] daily life. Not only the manioc roots are washed in the water but the babies
 [85] too; the mothers vigorously shake their large baskets of roots, then stop
 to splash water over the backs of the children. For a short time there is
 cacophony, with screaming babies, splashing water, continuous chatter and
 laughter, and even barking dogs. But soon the stream is left to myriads of
 white and brimstone-yellow butterflies which circle everlastingly over the
 sandbanks, and the women, refreshed, their long black hair glistening in
 the sun, return up the path to the *maloca*.

Tobacco plants are nearly always grown in a little patch directly in front

A graceful Tucano canoe.

[see p. 66-A]